NPL Factsheets for Michigan:

SHIAWASSEE RIVER

EPA REGION 5

Livingston County
Howell

EPA ID# MID980794473

8th Congressional District

Last Update: February 2002

Site Description

Since 1969, the Cast Forge Company and now Western Wheel have manufactured aluminum cast products in Howell, Michigan. Until 1973, wastewater contaminated by hydraulic fluids containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) was discharged by the potentially responsible parties (PRPs) to the South Branch of the Shiawassee River. From 1973 to 1977, wastewater was discharged into a 400,000 gallon on-site lagoon. Discharges from this lagoon, as well as periodic overflows, have contaminated nearby wetlands and, subsequently, the Shiawassee River.

In 1978 and 1979, the state detected high levels of PCBs in soils around the site and in on-site monitoring wells. Concentrations above one part per million (ppm) were found in Shiawassee River sediments fourteen miles downstream of the plant.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed through Federal, State, and potentially responsible parties' actions.

NPL Listing History: Proposed Date: 12/30/82
Final Date: 09/08/83

Threats and Contaminants

PCBs have been detected in fish, sediments, and soil. Wetland contamination has been identified. The health threat of greatest concern is eating PCB-contaminated fish. Other health threats include direct contact with contaminated river sediments and soils.

Cleanup Progress

In November 1977, the state filed suit against Cast Forge for PCB-contamination of the environment. The case was settled through a consent judgment in June 1981. Under that settlement, the company removed the lagoon, cleaned up PCB-contaminated soil and sediment from its property, and provided $750,000 for restoration of the Shiawassee River. Dredging of the South Branch of the Shiawassee River began in June, 1982. Only the first mile downstream from the plant was vacuumed, removing approximately 2,600 pounds of PCBs prior to exhausting the funds. Both the site property and river still contain PCBs.

The state began a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) in September 1986. Field sampling activities were started in October 1987, and completed in November 1989.

The RI Report was finalized in January 1992. The final study of cleanup alternatives was submitted in December 1997, and a proposed plan was released to the public in August of 1998. Because the data used to develop cost estimates was obtained as long ago as 1986, it was determined that additional data should be obtained to develop more accurate cost estimates for the site.

Additional sampling of the site began in November 1999 and was completed in April 2000. This sample data was released to the public in the data evaluation report, May 2000. The

supplemental Feasibility Study report was released early 2001 and a Record of Decision (ROD) was signed on September 28, 2001. The ROD selected remediating the floodplain and contaminated areas near cast forge to be remediated to 10 ppm, PCBs. The river is to be remediated to 5ppm, PCBs, for the first mile only. Design of the remediation is expected to begin in spring/summer 2002.

Contacts

Remedial Project Manager
Thomas G. Williams
(312) 886-6157
williams.thomas@epa.gov

Community Involvement Coordinator
David Novak
(312) 886-7478
novak.dave@epa.gov